



said plurality of pocket-sized fly boxes being of different types.

25. (Amended) A portable system for holding, storing and transporting fishing equipment, comprising:

an integrated fly box support and a fishing rod holder made of a single piece of rigid material, said fishing rod holder configured to hold a fishing rod in a horizontal orientation while said fly box is being accessed; and

a fastener that releasably secures a fly box to said base piece so it can be accessed without removing it from said base piece.

REMARKS

It is noted that claims 19 – 21 were withdrawn, on the basis that there was no allowable generic claim. It is respectfully requested that these claims be reinserted upon allowance of a generic claim.

The Office Action rejected claims 1 – 8 and 23 – 25 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Miller, United States Patent No. 4,529,112. This rejection is respectfully traversed as to original claims 1 – 8. There is no pocket-sized fly box disclosed anywhere in Miller. The box shown is a tackle box. A pocket-sized fly box is a term of art in fly fishing, and must fit in a normal pocket in normal human clothing. A tackle box of the size shown in Miller cannot be confused by anyone skilled in the fly fishing art with a pocket-sized fly box. Moreover, there is no fastener for securing a pocket-sized fly box in Miller. Further, many more of the limitations of claims 1 – 8, such as the limitations of claim 4, are not shown in Miller and were not mentioned in the Office Action.

It is noted that claims 1 and 25 have been amended to include many limitations not shown in Miller, such as: the harness securing the base piece to the chest of a fisherman, with the base piece resting on the chest and covering less than 50% of the chest in a normal adult human, a fastener that releasably secures a fly box, a fastener that secures any one of a plurality of different fly boxes, and the fly box support and fishing rod holder being integrated and made from a single piece of rigid material. Further, the tackle box in Miller cannot be accessed while the rod is in a horizontal position. If this was tried,

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everything in the box would be dumped out, and therefore no reasonable person would attempt such access. Thus, Miller cannot anticipate claims 1 and 25. All other claims depend on either claim 1 or 25, so they are not anticipated either.

The Office Action also rejects claims 9 – 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Miller does not show a chest fly box system, but a hip tackle box system. There is a world of difference between the two. The chest fly box system can be used when using waders, when sitting in a boat or canoe, and when using a float tube. Contrary to the Office Action, forming the fly box from a single piece of construction material does have significant advantages. This allows the two parts to function together, with the rod holder supporting the fly box, without complex joining parts, strings, or straps that get in the way when the fly fisherman is trying to attach a fly while forced to stand or sit in an awkward position due to the uncontrolled natural conditions. As any fly fisherman knows, the less your equipment has elements that can get in the way or fail, the more chance you have of catching that wary fish, instead of a piece of your equipment. The angles, projections and complex mechanisms of Miller are a fly fisherman's nightmare.

All the other elements mentioned above which are not in Miller also solve significant problems. A fly box system that covers less than 50% of the chest minimizes discomfort in hot weather. The ability to access a fly box while a rod is being held horizontal is a necessity when fishing a stream with trees with overhanging branches. Being able to attach any of a plurality of different types of fly boxes permits the fisherman to use the fly boxes provided by many different fly manufacturers, and thus eliminates resorting flies to different boxes. The rigid frame solves a very significant problem for someone who has ever tried to access a fly box while keeping a fishing rod in control on a non-rigid support. Fly boxes that flop around and fishing rods free to swing in a gust of wind make fly fishing a trial, if not impossible.

Applicant has reviewed all of the many references that the Office Action has mentioned as being pertinent to the disclosure. The combinations recited in amended

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claims 1 and 25 are not disclosed or suggested in any of the references or their combinations. Thus, amended claims 1 and 25 are patentable. The other claims are patentable also at least for the reason that they depend on a patentable claim, but also for the reasons mentioned above.

Based upon the foregoing amendment and remarks, claims 1 – 18 and 23 – 25 as amended are patentable and their reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested. No fees are seen to be required. If any fee is seen to be required, please charge it to Deposit Account No. 50-1848.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADEIn The Claims:

1. (Amended) A chest fly box system for holding fishing equipment, comprising:

a base piece for supporting a pocket-sized fly box;

a harness that secures said base piece to the [body] chest of a fisherman, with said base piece resting on said chest and covering less than 50% of said chest in a normal adult human; and

a fastener that releasably secures any one of a plurality of pocket-sized fly boxes [on] to said base piece so they can be accessed without removing them from said base piece, said plurality of pocket-sized fly boxes being of different types.

25. (Amended) A portable system for holding, storing and transporting fishing equipment, comprising:

[a] an integrated fly box[;] support and a fishing rod holder made of a single piece of rigid material, said fishing rod holder [attached to said fly box and] configured to hold a fishing rod in a horizontal orientation while said fly box is being accessed; and

a fastener that releasably secures a fly box to said base piece so it can be accessed without removing it from said base piece.

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